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author, as, *e. g.*, when he states (p. 53): "In the sign 'a, 'i, 'u, the Assyrians possessed a character for indicating the breathing, *but it is very rarely used.*"[3] To our knowledge it is used quite as often as many other signs of the syllabary.

Only occasionally a printer's error appears, as amdaḫis for amdaḫiṣ (p. 53, l. 16), etc. The name of the head of the Assyrian pantheon is perhaps better read Ašur, instead of Aššur (pp. 72 *passim*).

We heartily recommend the book to the beginners who cannot yet master King's *First Steps* or Delitzsch's *Assyrian Grammar.*

W. MUSS-ARNOLT.

THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO.

THOMPSON'S INDEFINITE ARTICLE IN ASSYRIAN.[4]

Two years ago we had the pleasure of calling the attention of the readers of this JOURNAL to Mr. Thompson's *The Reports of the Magicians and Astrologers of Nineveh and Babylon.* Since the publication of this important work, the author and Mr. King have been engaged chiefly in the preparation of the *Cuneiform Texts from Babylonian Tablets in the British Museum,* under the editorial supervision of Mr. Budge, of which the authorities of the British Museum have thus far published fifteen volumes. While reading and copying such texts, Mr. Thompson noted from time to time a considerable number of passages in which the case-endings of the noun have been dropped, notwithstanding the fact that the noun is obviously not in the construct state. He now publishes some forty examples, and believes that they prove the existence of traces of an absolute state in Assyrian, similar to that in use in Aramaic; proving that when a noun is employed in Babylonian and Assyrian with case-endings it possesses the force of the emphatic state in Aramaic, even though it has apparently no equivalent for the post-positive article in the dialects of the latter. Syriac being one of the best known of the Aramaic dialects, the author divided the examples presented into groups, arranged under the various rules—quoted *verbatim*—for the use of the absolute in Syriac, as found in M. Duval's *Traité de grammaire Syriaque* (1881).

Extracts from the grammatical writings of Sir H. Rawlinson, J. Oppert, Sayce, Flemming, Jensen, Latrille, Delitzsch, Scheil and Fossey, show that, though the occurrence of a noun without case-endings and yet *not* in the construct state is well recognized, its real nature and significance has not yet been found. All the cases mentioned by Thompson appear to indicate the idea of a certain indefiniteness which would bring them into a category similar to that of Syriac nouns in the absolute state. If such a case as ultu rêš adi kit, "from beginning to end," be taken, it is obvious that neither rêš nor kit can be in the construct state, and yet both have lost their case-endings. The Assyrian noun

[3] Italicized by the reviewer.

[4] ON TRACES OF AN INDEFINITE ARTICLE IN ASSYRIAN. By R. Campbell Thompson, M.A. London: *David Nutt*, 1902. 31 pp.

when used with its case-endings will be the equivalent—in sense and meaning, although not etymologically—of the Aramaic emphatic state, and the forms without case-endings—other than the construct—will similarly correspond with the absolute.

The author has succeeded in selecting excellent and telling proof texts for his arguments, without, in the least, denying that in all the cases considerable laxity prevails. The noun in Assyrian need not of necessity adhere to any fixed law, as will be seen at once by comparing variant readings. Here is a point where, we believe, the author or some other scholar, working along the lines of the author, could strengthen the argument considerably by discussing critically all the cases of indefinite article, having variant readings, in certain divisions of literature, say, the historical texts. Such a study would, we assume, prove the author's statement that the fundamental idea of indefiniteness appears to underlie the cases in Assyrian where the noun—not in the construct—drops its case-endings. This was in most cases, at least, an intentional dropping, and not accidental; and further, since this phenomenon takes place in prose as well as in poetry, it was in no wise due to a regard for meter. P. 26*b*, read e-pi-šat instead of e-pi-sat.

W. MUSS-ARNOLT.

THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO.

AN ASSYRIAN DOOMSDAY BOOK.[1]

In the year 1086 the famous English Domesday Survey was completed by the commissioners of William the Conqueror, and embodied in the Domesday Book, so called because it was no more possible to appeal from it than from the Last Judgment.[2] Many centuries before this, similar census were compiled in Assyria and Babylonia. The book before us contains remains of the earliest survey of the district about Ḫarran. That similar records of the survey of other districts may yet be recovered is quite probable.[3]

The census lists published and discussed by the author are made up of twenty-two separate pieces, collected from forty-three fragments, chief

[1] AN ASSYRIAN DOOMSDAY BOOK; or *Liber Censualis* of the District round Ḫarran, in the seventh century B. C. Copied from the Cuneiform Tablets in the British Museum. By the Rev. C. H. W. Johns, M.A., Queens' College, Cambridge. Transliterated and Translated; with Index of Proper Names and Glossary (= Assyriologische Bibliothek, herausgegeben von Friedrich Delitzsch und Paul Haupt, XVII). Leipzig: *J. C. Hinrichs'sche Buchhandlung*, 1901. viii + 82 pp.; 17 plates. M. 21.

[2] See S. R. Gardiner, *A Student's History of England*, London and New York, 1892, pp. 111-13; Benjamin Terry, *The History of England*, Chicago, 1901, pp. 170, 171.

[3] "The value to a great empire, such as that of Assyria, or of Babylonia, of an accurate record of the available population, its resources and occupations, must always have been appreciated. We now know that from very early times (the third millenium, B. C.) ample material existed for such a census. Estates were carefully surveyed and the areas of the fields estimated from actual measurements, correct to the last finger-breadth. The boundaries, names of neighbours, of roads, canals, streets, or public buildings, adjoining, were exactly stated. The class of land, corn-field, vineyard, orchard, or pasture, the names of the tenants or serfs, and the average yield were set down. Boundary stones engraved with the minutest details of the adjoining estate, and often bearing a short abstract of its recent history, were erected" (preface).